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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
29 September 1965

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Dominican Republic: Prospects for
Stability -- A Balance Sheet

A. Garcia Godoy's actions as Provisional President have roused the expectations of the left in the Dominican Republic and created bitter resentments among the military and moderate political elements. During his first weeks in office he has continually made concessions to the rebel camp -- concessions that have been seen by the military chiefs as threatening to their position and by the moderates as insuring institutional advantages which would bring about an election victory for the left.

B. Garcia Godoy has made no progress on re-integration of the rebel zone and little on arms collection. He apparently feels he must go "softly" with the rebels on these issues so as to be able to solve them without resort to force. As time passes, however, the rebels have felt encouraged to depict themselves as the victors in the civil war and to make increasing demands on Garcia Godoy at the expense of their opponents.

C. In these circumstances the outlook for political stability will change rapidly when IAPF leaves the country. Departure of the IAPF is already becoming a heady political issue. Garcia Godoy is suspicious and distrustful of the military and unwilling to become dependent on them for fear of seriously compromising his political future. This leaves him no alternative but to solicit voluntary cooperation from the left, an almost hopeless task, and the formulation of policies calculated to develop popular support.

State Dept. review completed

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D. Unless the provisional regime makes an effective effort to resolve the bitter enmity existing between the contending factions, longer term political stability is unlikely. Neither side is presently reconciled to accept the results of elections if the other wins and both are bent on insuring that the "suspended revolution" reaches a conclusion.

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Dominican Republic: Prospects for
Stability--A Balance Sheet

Introduction

1. Garcia Godoy's first weeks in office have raised the expectations of the left in the Dominican Republic and aroused the bitter indignation of the moderates, the military and conservatives. Far from drawing the warring camps together, the Provisional President's actions have contributed to a sudden increase in tensions and, if continued, could undermine the OAS settlement or insure the coming to power of a deeply anti-American regime.

The threatening moves by military leaders against the government on 28 September were symptomatic of growing dismay with the new government. Apparently these military moves were triggered when Garcia Godoy not only sidestepped the regular military chiefs in choosing a commission to reintegrate rebel personnel into the military establishment, but named a predominantly rebel-oriented body. Ambassador Bunker has apparently persuaded the incensed military chiefs not to carry out their threats against Garcia Godoy, but there is little reason to suppose they are more than temporarily cooled off.

This memorandum analyzes the longer range dangers inherent in the Dominican situation and the critical role played by Garcia Godoy. It also analyzes the considerations governing the choice of Hector Garcia Godoy as Provisional President, the general direction of his policies and the complexion of his appointees. Finally it explores the consequences for the Dominican Republic if the present trend in Dominican policies continues.

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2. Garcia Godoy's selection as negotiator during the recent strife and his appointment as Provisional President were dictated by the fact that he was acceptable to all political factions. This acceptability, plus the presence of the IAPF, were the principal assets of the new government. A major task of Garcia Godoy was to effect a reconciliation between the moderates of left and right. This requires that he obtain active support of both or at least that his policies and actions be so shaped that neither side fears that its interests are being sacrificed to the other. The presence of the IAPF seemed originally to guarantee Garcia Godoy several months in which to effect the kind of political climate in which elections could be staged.

3. However, the Hector Garcia Godoy government is in danger of losing the support and confidence of several groups, including the military, conservatives and many moderates. These groups have been alarmed by the regime's reluctance to press for the dismantling of the rebel zone and by ineffectual steps to collect rebel arms. At the same time, they are concerned by the concessions the government continues to make to the rebels since they enhance the feeling that the settlement was a rebel victory.

4. If the provisional government does not take steps to regain the support of these elements, it will be unable to achieve its stated goal of creating a climate of confidence in which to hold free elections. Furthermore, a continuation of present policies would increase the likelihood of a rebel victory at the polls and complicate for future regimes the problem of maintaining stability.

5. Indeed, there is some doubt that the Garcia Godoy government can survive until election time (in the spring or early summer of 1966) unless it begins to balance its concessions to the rebels with some concessions to the conservatives and to the military establishment. The IAPF is, of course, a very significant stabilizing force, but the Dominican military might still take the risk of intervening against Garcia Godoy if convinced he were likely to succumb to leftist demands that the military be purged.

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There is also some chance, if Garcia Godoy remains reluctant to use the police and military forces, of a series of violent incidents and reprisals leading to a breakdown of public order. Under such circumstances--or even under a continuation of the lesser pressures he has encountered so far--Garcia Godoy might simply resign. The outlook for the continuation in power of his provisional regime would become much dimmer, if as appears possible, it joins in the already existing demands for an early withdrawal of the IAPF.

Garcia Godoy's Motives and Tactics

6. In following his present line of policies, Garcia Godoy's motivations appear to be mixed. His liberal political values probably make him more sympathetic to the rebels than he realizes or admits. Underlying certain of his concessions to rebel demands regarding labor policies, for example, is genuine concern over working conditions in the Dominican Republic. His desire to avoid appearing as a "reactionary" hampers forthright antisubversive measures. He is not without political ambitions, moreover, perhaps even hoping at some future point to stand for elections as president. He is thus anxious to avoid the stigma of seeming to be a US puppet.

7. Since his installation, Garcia Godoy has made no effort to challenge the rebels' continued control over their zone, although under military pressure on September 28 he promised to work out procedures to solve the problem. Neither has he disarmed the rebels or collected their weapons. As a privileged sanctuary and base for forays into the countryside, the zone presents a distinct threat to stability everywhere in the country. On 16 September, for example, a mob left the zone to demonstrate for the removal of some government officials and returned safely when challenged by police.

8. Under the terms of the settlement, the rebels were to begin to disarm and after "due course" the provisional government was to take such steps as were necessary to reintegrate the sector into Santo Domingo. Garcia Godoy pledged in writing to his top military chiefs that the provisional government would wait no more than 15 days--that is until 18 September--before taking action to force rebel compliance. He has failed to do so. It is now probable that the only weapons turned over will be defective or too large to be hidden.

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9. Garcia Godoy has said repeatedly that the issue of disarmament is of major concern to his regime. He is unwilling to employ force to seize the rebels' arms. In order to win rebel cooperation, therefore, he is following, in his own words "a soft position." This tactic, symbolized by actions which can be construed as pro-rebel, has deeply disturbed Dominican moderates and conservatives, particularly the military.

Concessions to the Rebels

10. The first move the new regime made to gain rebel cooperation was the abolition of General Wessin's Armed Forces Training Center, followed within a few days by the ousting of Wessin. Instead of inducing the rebels to comply voluntarily with provisions of the Act of Reconciliation the Wessin affair increased rebel appetites for changes in Dominican military leadership--demands that culminated in Juan Bosch's call on 25 September for a purge of 8 to 10 top military leaders. Garcia Godoy then advised US officials in Santo Domingo that he was considering a "package deal" whereby Francisco Rivera Caminero would be removed as Defense Minister and replaced by an officer who has been described by others as compliant and unlikely to command the allegiance of other officers, in return for vague rebel assurance to proceed with disarming. However, after a series of conversations, including several with US officials Garcia Godoy said he had decided against any "immediate" changes in the armed forces leadership.

11. Garcia Godoy has failed to counter leftist attempts to oust key government officials or respond forcefully to the rebel seizure of the University of Santo Domingo. The rebels have physically ousted officials of the Education, Health, and Public Works Ministries. Moreover, the provisional government capitulated to extremist demands and replaced the head of the government-owned sugar corporation with a man acceptable to Bosch's party. The Communists controlled paper Patria greeted this change with the statement "70,000 workers emerged triumphant when the provisional government acceded to their demands." This has shaken the confidence of business and financial leaders--confidence vital to the Provisional Government's avowed intent of resuscitating the nation's economy.

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12. The case of the University is particularly disturbing. Garcia Godoy has proved unwilling to offer more than moral support to a legally elected rector ousted from office by what amounts to a leftist coup. Garcia Godoy has told the deposed rector that he is not willing to use troops or police to remove the insurgents who are now in possession of the university and all its facilities, including a printing plant.

Appointments

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13. With the appointment of a Foreign Minister on 27 September, Garcia Godoy completed formation of his cabinet and the bulk of his administration. Although most of the cabinet members are moderates, the government has a marked leftward orientation.

Many of the appointees made to the courts by the liberal Supreme Court appear to be sympathetic to the left, indicating future difficulty in the rapid prosecution of subversives. Although Garcia Godoy agreed to review critical appointments with US officials, he has done so in only 17 out of 224 of the government's nominations. In several cases, he at first disregarded US counsel only to say later that he would remove questionable officeholders--something he has not done.

Opposition

14. While disturbing to many non-leftist Dominicans, the regime's current course has not yet resulted in the emergence of active political opposition. The military have warned Garcia Godoy that his policies may end in a default to the left. On 28 September the military chiefs were incensed by Garcia Godoy's appointment of a commission with a predominantly pro-rebel cast charged with reintegrating rebel officers into the military services. In the face of strong pressures from the chiefs, the President in this case backed down and agreed to select a new commission.

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Exiled General Wessin has spoken of acting as a focal point for conservative and right wing discontent

Insurgency

15. Meanwhile, the extreme left is continuing to make preparations for guerrilla warfare. The pro-Peking Dominican Popular Movement (MPD) has plans for terrorist activity and an elementary form of guerrilla warfare in the countryside. Elements of the divided pro-Castro 14th of June Group will probably join the MPD. They may, however, conserve the bulk of their resources until the IAPF has left. Because these groups lack support among the traditionally conservative peasantry, Dominican security forces could probably limit such insurgent activity so that it would not be a major threat. If, however, harsh repressive measures are indiscriminately employed and the economic situation remains stagnant, the extremists might gain significant non-Communist support.

Outlook

16. The outlook for political stability will change drastically when the IAPF leaves the Dominican Republic. The provisional government will be under increasing domestic pressure to effect the IAPF's departure in the next few months. In the meantime, the extreme left can be counted on to create incidents to embarrass the provisional government over the IAPF presence. Even moderate politicians will use the presence of the IAPF as a campaign issue. The demonstrations of 27 September over IAPF occupation of school buildings were the first of such incidents. Bosch has already indicated that the IAPF presence will be a major campaign issue and has called for strikes to bring about its withdrawal. Even relatively conservative Joaquin Balaguer has said the continued IAPF presence offends national "sovereignty."

17. If the provisional government were to ask for the IAPF's removal it would be difficult for Latin American nations in the OAS, many of them still sensitive over the US intervention, to fail to comply. Garcia Godoy might exploit such a request in order to win popular backing. He has already displayed a sensitivity over the OAS resolution calling for joint OAS-provisional government determination

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of the date of IAPF withdrawals. He has said that domestic politics demand a statement that the provisional government would prefer to make the decision on withdrawal. In a recent interview with a Mexican magazine, Garcia Godoy reportedly said that he hopes the IAPF will leave "soon" and that the election campaign should be conducted without the presence of foreign troops.

18. Until some decision is reached on the IAPF, the paramount problem relating to security and stability will be the conduct of the provisional government. The present trend is toward further concessions to the rebels. Garcia Godoy clearly is reluctant to resort to any action that might entail use of force. He is suspicious and distrustful of the military and unwilling to become dependent on them for fear of seriously compromising his political future. This leaves him no alternative but to solicit voluntary cooperation from the left, an almost hopeless task, and the formulation of policies calculated to develop popular support.

19. Unless the provisional regime makes an effective effort to resolve the bitter enmity existing between the contending factions, longer term political stability is unlikely. Neither side is presently reconciled to accept the results of elections if the other wins and both are bent on insuring that the "suspended revolution" reaches a conclusion.

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: PROSPECTS FOR
STABILITY--A BALANCE SHEET

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE
Office of Current Intelligence

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